

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 ACDA-05 FEA-01 AGR-05

CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIEP-01 OFA-01 COME-00 DLOS-04

DOT-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 INT-05

JUSE-00 NSF-01 OES-03 OMB-01 SAL-01 /127 W

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R 041540Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3709

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMCONSUL DOUALA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 2709

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PFOR, US, NI

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: NIGERIA

REF: STATE 37591

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1. GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THE OVERTHROW OF EX-HEAD OF STATE YAKUBU GOWON IN JULY 1975, NIGERIA'S MILITARY GOVERNMENT

PROCLAIMED ITS FOREIGN POLICY WOULD BE BASED ON NATIONAL SELF-INTEREST IN THE FIRST INSTANCE AND AFRICAN CONSIDERATIONS IN THE SECOND. THE FMG ANNOUNCED THAT NIGERIAN DELEGATIONS WOULD BE GIVEN CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS ON ISSUES AND WOULD NO LONGER DUCK HARD DECISIONS

THROUGH ABSTENTIONS. UNDER MUHAMMED THE FMG ACTIVELY SOUGHT TO POSE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN AFRICA AND THE THIRD WORLD GENERALLY. NIGERIAN LEADERS SINCERELY BELIEVE THEIR NATION HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN BRINGING ABOUT THE END OF COLONIALISM AND RACISM IN AFRICA AND IN REDRESSING THE TERMS OF TRADE BETWEEN DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED NATIONS.

WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT LAST MONTH'S ASSASSINATION OF MUHAMMED WILL RESULT IN ANY CHANGE IN NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY. GIVEN THIS SITUATION, IT IS NOT SURPRISING

THAT THE U.S. AND NIGERIA OFTEN FIND THEMSELVES IN DISAGREEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL FORA WHEN SOUTHERN AFRICA

, THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC DEMANDS AND NON-ALIGNED "GUT" ISSUES ARE THE SUBJECTS OF DISCUSSION. END OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY.

2. NIGERIAN MULTILATERAL OBJECTIVES: AMONG NIGERIA'S IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA WE WOULD LIST THE FOLLOWING:

(A) THE END OF MINORITY RULE AND COLONIALISM IN AFRICA. NOW THAT THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES ARE INDEPENDENT WE CAN EXPECT NIGERIA TO CONCENTRATE ON NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE, WHILE KEEPING THE PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA.

(B) A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE OAU AND IN NON-ALIGNED COUNCILS.

(C) THE CONSOLIDATION OF NIGERIAN HEGEMONY IN WEST AFRICAN REGIONAL AFFAIRS, USING ECOWAS AS ONE MEANS TO ACHIEVE IT.

(D) THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE TERMS OF TRADE BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING NATIONS THROUGH SUCH DEVICES AS COMMODITY AGREEMENTS, OPEC AND HIGH CRUDE OIL PRICES, HARD BARGAINING AT CIEC AND THE USE OF ECOWAS AND APC (LOME CONVENTION) TO NEGOTIATE BETTER TRADE TERMS WITH EUROPE.

NIGERIA PLAYS AN ACTIVE ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND ITS NATIONALS

HOLD OFFICE IN INTERNATIONAL BODIES, INCLUDING THE ICJ, THE OAU, THE CONFIDENTIAL

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AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND OPEC. NIGERIA ACTIVELY SEEKS MEMBERSHIP IN VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTICIPATES IN THEM (E.G. IMCO, ICAO, CIEC, DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE). LAST SUMMER'S COUP INTERRUPTED A BID BY NIGERIA FOR A SEAT ON THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL.

3. INTERACTION WITH OTHER NATIONS: PERHAPS THE OAU EXERTS THE GREATEST INFLUENCE OVER NIGERIAN DECISIONS ON SPECIFIC MULTILATERAL ISSUES, PARTICULARLY ON THOSE ISSUES WHICH RELATE DIRECTLY TO AFRICA.

EVEN ON ISSUES WHOSE RAMIFICATIONS EXTEND BEYOND AFRICA, AN OAU
DECISION IS LIKELY TO AFFECT NIGERIAN POSITIONS (LAW OF THE SEA AND
THE 1973 BREAK WITH ISRAEL PROVIDE EXAMPLES). AT THE SAME TIME NIGERI
A'S
SIZE AND OIL WEALTH GIVE IT AN INFLUENTIAL VOICE (WHICH IT IS NOT
RELUCTANT TO USE) IN THE OAU DECISION MAKING PROCESS. AS THE OAU
SUMMIT ON ANGOLA DEMONSTRATED, NIGERIAN ARM TWISTING WITHIN THE
OAU IS NOT ALWAYS FULLY SUCCESSFUL, BUT THAT SAME EXERCISE HIGH-
LIGHTED NIGERIAN DETERMINATION NOT TO AVOID A BATTLE ON AN
AFRICAN ISSUE EVEN WHEN PLAYING IN
THE SAME GAME WITH SUPER POWERS. WEST AFRICAN REGIONAL
CONSIDERATIONS ALSO AFFECT NIGERIAN POLICY ALTHOUGH THIS GOVERNMENT
APPEARS LESS CONCERNED THAT ITS PREDECESSOR THAT THE USE OF NIGERIA'S
SIZE AND WEALTH TO GAIN INFLUENCE WILL ALIENATE ITS NEIGHBORS.
FOR EXAMPLE, NIGERIAN OPPOSITION TO THE INCLUSION OF CAMEROON OR
POTENTIAL RIVAL ZAIRE IN ECOWAS HAS, TOGETHER WITH NIGERIA
INSISTENCE ON THE PARTICIPATION OF NON-BLACK NORTH AFRICA IN THE
SECOND WORLD FESTIVAL OF BLACK ARTS AND CULTURE (FESTAC), LED
TO THE CURRENT STRAINED RELATIONSHIP WITH SENEGAL. OTHER GROUP
INFLUENCES ON NIGERIAN DECISION MAKING POLICY WOULD INCLUDE THE UN,
THE ORGANIZATION OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES (IN WHICH NIGERIA SEEKS A
LARGER ROLE, THE PURSUIT OF WHICH WILL LIKELY RESULT IN MORE DECISION
S
LIKE THE ONE TO SUPPORT THE NORTH KOREAN POSITION AT LAST FALL'S
UNGA), OPEC (IN WHICH NIGERIA'S MAIN INTEREST APPEARS TO BE THE
MAINTENANCE OF HIGH PRICES FOR CRUDE OIL
TO FINANCE BOTH AMBITIOUS INTERNAL
DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND THE RISING COST OF IMPORTS), AND TO A MUCH
LESSER EXTENT, THE COMMONWEALTH. THE PRESENT ARAB-AFRICAN ALLIANCE
ALSO PLAYS A PART IN NIGERIAN DECISION MAKING, RELATING AS IT DOES
TO OPEC, THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC DEMANDS, AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES,
AREAS IN WHICH THERE IS CONSIDERABLE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE OAU AND
THE ARAB STATES. FROM A PURELY NEGATIVE STANDPOINT, NIGERIAN REACTION
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TO SOUTH AFRICAN INITIATIVES, POLICIES AND ACTIONS ARE PREDICTABLY
UNFAVORABLE. IN SUM, NIGERIA HAS AN INFLUENTIAL VOICE IN THE OAU
AND THIRD WORLD AND IS INCREASINGLY INCLINED TO EXERCISE ITS INFLUENC
E
AND LEADERSHIP. DESPITE NIGERIA'S POLITICAL DIFFERENCES WITH U.S.,
ITS DESIRE FOR TECHNOLOGY AND CAPITAL GOODS COUPLED WITH AMERICAN
ENERGY NEEDS HAVE COMBINED TO PROMOTE A MUTUALLY BENEFICAL
COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND NIGERIA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LAGOS 2709

4. MEASURE OF CONTROL EXERCISED BY LAGOS OVER NIGERIAN REPRESENTATIVE
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TO INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS: NIGERIAN REPRESENTATIVES AND DELEGATIONS
TO INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS ARE INSTRUCTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
WHILE PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND TACTICS MAY BE LEFT TO THE DISCRETION
OF ITS REPRESENTATIVES, THE FMG THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF
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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (MEA) MAKES SUBSTANTIVE DECISIONS. COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN LAGOS AND THE SITES OF MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (NEW YORK, EUROPE, ADDIS ABABA) ARE GOOD AND PERMIT CONSTANT CONTACT AND DIALOGUE BETWEEN HOME BASE AND DELEGATES OVERSEAS. NIGERIA'S COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (AND THE NEW HEAD OF STATE) ARE ON PUBLIC RECORD AS STATING THAT NIGERIAN REPRESENTATIVES AT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS ARE ACTING UNDER CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS, BASED ON NIGERIAN AND AFRICAN INTERESTS.

5. NIGERIAN RECEPTIVENESS TO U.S. REPRESENTATIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES: NIGERIAN OFFICIALS WILL LISTEN TO AND DISCUSS WITH US OUR REPRESENTATIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. THEY ARE NOT NECESSARILY RECEPTIVE TO THEM HOWEVER, AS EVIDENCED BY NIGERIA'S VOTING RECORD AT LAST FALL'S UNGA. ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO AFRICA OR ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE FOR THE NON-ALIGNED WORLD, OUR REPRESENTATIONS HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON NIGERIAN DECISION MAKING. ON SOME ISSUES (SOUTHERN AFRICAN ONES ARE GOOD EXAMPLES) NIGERIA IS IN BASIC DISAGREEMENT WITH STATED U.S. POLICY. ON OTHER ISSUES (KOREA AT LAST FALL'S UNGA), THE DESIRE OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN NON-ALIGNED CIRCLES MOVES THE DECISION MAKERS TO ADOPT POSITIONS OPPOSED TO OURS. IN FACT, WE HAVE LITTLE LEVERAGE TO EXERT ON NIGERIA. NIGERIA CAN WELL BENEFIT FROM AMERICAN GOODS, SERVICE, TECHNOLOGY AND INVESTMENT BUT IT CAN PROCURE SIMILAR IMPORTS ELSEWHERE. MOREOVER, WE ARE VULNERABLE IN OUR NEED FOR ACCESS TO NIGERIAN CRUDE AND TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE NIGERIAN MARKET. WE SHOULD BE WARY OF USING EXCESSIVE PRESSURE OR OVERKILL, TACTICS WHICH RUN THE RISK OF BACKFIRING AND BRINGING ABOUT NEGATIVE DECISIONS. WHILE THE NIGERIANS SOMETIMES SEEK OUR UNDERSTANDING OR SUPPORT ON SUBSTANTIVE INTERNATIONAL ISSUES (FOR EXAMPLE THEIR REQUEST THAT WE USE OUR INFLUENCE TO BRING ABOUT THE REMOVAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS FROM ANGOLA), IT IS MORE USUAL THAT THE FMG'S POSITION IS OFFICIALLY COMMUNICATED TO US IN RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS FROM OUR SIDE. NIGERIA DOES, REGULARLY, SEEK OUR SUPPORT FOR NIGERIAN CANDIDATES FOR INTERNATIONAL OFFICES OR GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION ON AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION (E.G. IMCO, ICJ).

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